Mothers: It's important to listen to Mom

■ Continued from Page One

■ Listen to your mother — and do what *she* wants:

One tired Portland grandmother, who didn't want her name used, said the kids take her out to eat, even though her bad teeth and sore gums keep her from enjoying it. They give her clothing she doesn't like and plants she can't take care of in the retirement center where she lives. Just once, she said, she wished someone would listen to what she wants: peace and quiet and time to relax, enjoying her family.

In that same vein, think about Mom's interests before you buy. If she likes to garden, get a tool or book. If she likes computers, how about a colorful mouse pad? If she's interested in travel, how about a subscription to a travel magazine?

■ Send a singing message. AT&T has a new service, 1-800-ATT-GIFT. For $4.95, you can choose from 50 songs. The song will play for 60 seconds, and then you can create a personal message of up to 30 seconds. You can dial the number on Mother's Day for last-minute delivery, an AT&T representative said. You do not have to be an AT&T customer to use the service.

■ Go for a walk with Mom. That's what Kyle Shephard, 8, of Portland, said he planned to do.

■ If your mom has a computer address, send an e-mail message of love.

Or try an on-line computer company. For example, with America Online, you can design a Mother's Day card she can see when she signs on to her computer. America Online users can access this area with the keywords: "Mother's Day 1995."

Other things available in "Mother's Day 1995" are a bulletin board where people have uploaded stories about their moms, a history of Mother's Day, famous mothers, quotes about moms and even preparing a special Mother's Day meal.

Other on-line companies offer similar services.

■ Call a major department store in the city where your mother lives — especially if you have a credit card from that particular store. Talk to the customer service department. You can buy gifts or gift certificates over the phone in her name.

■ If Mom enjoys it, take her out to eat. But beware: It will be crowded, and you won't be able to get into some places without reservations.

"The seven of us go to brunch, and it gives us an opportunity for the whole family to be together," said Sunni Waters of the National Restaurant Association. Mother's Day is the second biggest occasion to eat out, according to a Gallup Poll. (Birthdays come first).

■ Buy something special. According to the National Mother's Day Council, the most popular gift for Mother's Day is clothing. If you aren't sure what she likes, get a gift certificate and put it in a pretty card.

If you buy a card, you won't be alone. The value of manufacturers' shipments of Mother's Day greeting cards jumped from $80 million in 1987 to $148 million in 1992, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

■ Buy a flat of annual flowers and plant them in her garden. Or buy a nice planter for the porch.

■ Give a gift certificate for something she'd never buy for herself: a manicure, facial, massage, bath products.

■ If you are a child, ask Mom to tell you a story from her childhood, write it down, illustrate it and present it at dinner.

■ It's probably too late to have flowers delivered — members of Florist Transworld Delivery will send about 1.2 million flowers by wire over the weekend — but many supermarkets sell fresh bouquets and potted plants that you can deliver yourself.

■ Create your own bouquet. Some florists, street vendors and large supermarkets have a variety of flowers from which to choose.

■ Write a letter telling her how much you love her and why, and leave it where she'll find it. Or recount a story about a time together or a lesson she taught you.

■ Take photos of yourself and your kids, have a one-hour photo store crank them out and paste them in a scrapbook with your own funny captions.

■ Call your long-distance telephone company for a long-distance calling certificate.

■ Write a poem.

■ Have the kids draw around their hands. Cut out the drawings and put them in frames, along with their names, ages and special messages.

■ Call an airline, and use a credit card to buy Mom a ticket to visit you.

■ Make a donation in Mom's name to her favorite charity.

But remember, if you don't do anything else, at least do this: Say, "I love you."

MOTHER'S DAY

■ **WHY:** A woman by the name of Anna May Jarvis developed the concept of a national day to honor mothers and motherhood. The first Mother's Day was celebrated on May 10, 1908, with a service at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, W.Va. In 1914, President Wilson established the second Sunday in May as a national Mother's Day.

■ **WHO:** Of the estimated 103.4 million women ages 15 and older in the United States in 1993, 73.9 million were mothers, according to the U.S. Census. As of 1993, these mothers had given birth to an average of 2.7 children each.

■ **HOW OLD:** The average age of the nation's mothers in 1993 was 48.1 years.

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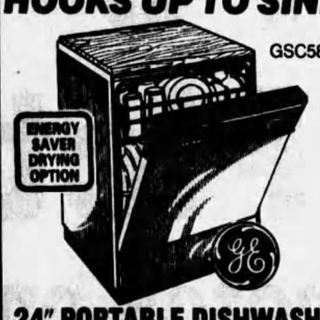

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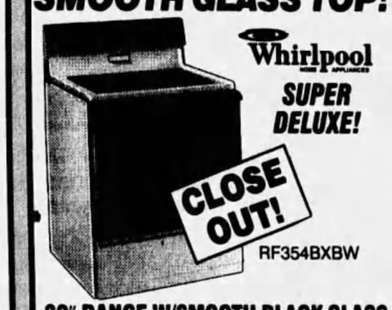

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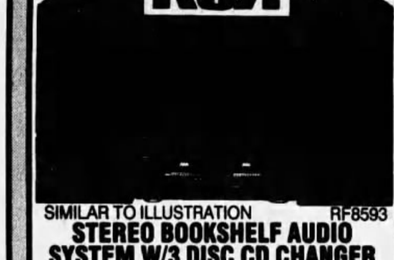

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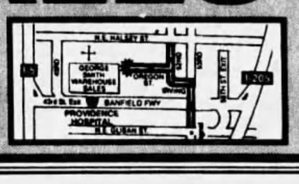

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